

ARCHAEOLOGICAL DATA RECOVERY SITE 31SP300*1*
CLEAR RUN BLACKSMITH-COOPER SHOP
SAMPSON COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA
(TIP B-1381, FEDERAL AID PROJECT BRSTP-411(1))

INTRODUCTION

Coastal Carolina Research, Inc., conducted an archaeological data recovery of the blacksmith-cooper shop (31SP300*1*) associated with the Clear Run National Register Historic Site (#1181 or 31SP300) in Sampson County, North Carolina. The investigations were conducted for the proposed replacement of Bridge 14 on NC 411 over the Black River between Garland and Harrells, in Sampson County, North Carolina (Figure 1). The study was conducted for the Planning and Environmental Branch of the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) in compliance with Section 106 on the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA-PL89-665); the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation's regulations for compliance with Section 106, codified as 36 CFR Part 800; and Section 4(f) of the Federal Transportation Act. The scope of the investigations was consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's *Standards and Guidelines for Historic Preservation Projects* (Federal Register, Vol. 48, No. 190, September 1983, P. 44716-44742, et seq.). The excavations were conducted in accordance with a scope of work (SOW) and data recovery plan prepared by the North Carolina Department of Transportation and dated July 15, 1996.

Site 31SP300*1* is located on the north side of NC 411 on the west bank of the Black River. Clear Run Plantation was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1985, and site 31SP300*1* was listed as a component of this site. Clear Run Plantation spans an area of 1,400 acres that includes 28 buildings or sites of buildings that contribute to the plantation's significance. Archaeological investigations were conducted at the site on December 8, 1993, and August 23-25, 1994, by archaeologists from the NCDOT in order to assess the potential effects of the bridge replacement on the site (Gray 1994a, Gray 1994b). It was recommended that data recovery be conducted to collect any information important to the understanding of the historic property. Those investigations were conducted in order to avoid any adverse effects to the site that may result from the construction of the NC 411 bridge replacement.

The analysis of the artifacts associated with the shop will add to the current knowledge of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century life along the Black River. This was an area that played an important role in the transportation of goods, particularly naval stores, to and from Wilmington before the advent of the railroad in the area. A. J. Johnson (1843-1914) was the original owner and founder of Clear Run. Prior to owning Clear Run, Johnson was in the Confederate Army and was captured at the Battle of Spotsylvania in 1864. He was kept as a prisoner of war for a year. Later he became one of the area's leading merchants and industrialists, farming 1,700 acres and owning a turpentine distillery, general store, furniture store, cotton gin, riverboats, gristmill, and

blacksmith shop. In addition, he served as postmaster at Clear Run, as a Sampson County commissioner, as a justice of the County Court, and as a director of the Bank of Clinton (Butchko 1985).

The purpose of the data recovery was to record the significant archaeological and historical information available at the site before the construction of the bridge and consequent destruction of the site.

The total area under study was approximately 6,455 square feet (600 m²), although the core of the site was previously estimated at 2,700 square feet by NCDOT archaeologists. Ten 10-x-10-foot and four 5-x-5-foot units were hand excavated within the Area of Potential Effect (APE). Seventeen features were identified and examined during the excavation. The majority of the blacksmith-cooper shop was excavated during the project, as evidenced by the presence of floor joists for a shed building and a separate dirt-floor furnace area. Excavation of units beyond the core of the site yielded minimal evidence that the site extended beyond these boundaries.

The project required 147.5 person-days and was conducted from January 23 to February 21, 1997. It was necessary to clear the site prior to excavation due to the preponderance of vines, shrubs, and trees. This was completed on January 23-24, 1997, and required 8 of the 147.5 person-days to complete. Clearing revealed the piles of timbers previously recorded by NCDOT archaeologists. These timbers were associated with the blacksmith-cooper shop and were mapped at their surface locations before excavation.

Loretta Lautzenheiser served as Principal Investigator and Victoria Saxe served as Field Director. Daniel Lynch, Kevin Magnuson, Christina Roberts, Brian Overton, Clay Swindell, Justin Stutz, Shane Petersen, and Michael Swaim provided assistance in the field. Wanda Stiles, Justin Stutz, Christina Roberts, Kevin Magnuson, Shane Petersen, and Brian Overton provided assistance in the lab. Clay Swindell conducted the analysis of metal artifacts and Daniel Lynch analyzed all other historic artifacts. Wanda Stiles conserved a sample of metal artifacts in the Coastal Carolina Research, Inc., lab. Michael Swaim and Brian Overton prepared the graphics.

Research was conducted at the Davis Library and the North Carolina Collection at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill; the Office of State Archaeology (OSA) and the Survey and Planning Branch, North Carolina Department of Archives and History in Raleigh; the Sampson County Courthouse in Clinton; and the library at Coastal Carolina Research in Tarboro.

Project assistance was provided by Tom Padgett, NCDOT; Amos McLamb and Beth McLamb Norris, Clear Run Plantation; Michael Harmon, National Forest Service; Spencer Waldron, Conservator for North Carolina State Historic Sites; and Terry Harper, North Carolina State Historic Sites. The assistance of all of these people is greatly appreciated.